



4 clutch pressure has been previously defined and is dependent upon the power of the clutch at which the vehicle can be operated with a slipping clutch over an extended period of time without damaging the clutch. When pushing the inch pedal down further, the clutch pressure of the friction clutch decreases further until it has reached a minimal clutch pressure 5 at which the disks of the clutch just come into contact. Said clutch pressure can no longer be reduced further by the inch pedal. If now the inch pedal is moved back in the opposite direction, i.e., in the direction of the starting position 1, then the clutch pressure is immediately raised by a defined value, thus maintaining the clutch actuating force, but causing the actuating device to actuate the clutch immediately in an engaging sense when increasing the clutch force further due to a movement of the inch pedal in the direction of the starting position since the hysteresis is compensated by the use of an engaging characteristic line 7 due to the actuation of the components. By means of inching in the engaging sense on the engaging characteristic line 7 and in the disengaging sense on a disengaging characteristic line 6, the hysteresis of the components is eliminated, thus passing on immediate responsive behavior of the inch function to the driver. Erroneous operation by the driver, due to an inch pedal that has been pushed down or released too far, therefore, is eliminated. When the inch pedal reaches a motion point 8, the service brake is also activated, which can be seen from line 9. When the engaging characteristic line 7 reaches a point 10, which is, likewise, defined such that the friction clutch is not damaged during extended operation and the inch pedal is moved further in the direction of the starting position 1, the clutch pressure is increased continuously up to the maximum clutch pressure thus completely engaging the clutch. When the clutch is operated for an impermissibly long time in a slipping state, the clutch is automatically actuated in the disengaging sense. The inch pedal must be pushed down further to start the inch process than when leaving the inch process. The difference between the inching starting point 3 and an inching end point 11 causes a brief erroneous operation of the gas pedal to have no negative effect when driving on uneven terrain. Through the electronic adjustment of the distance sensor and the detection of a starting point 12 of the service brake, it is possible to adjust the

inch function as desired with the characteristic line of the service brake 9 in the electronic control system, thus activating the service brake earlier or later, depending on the programming.